



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

Refer to:
OSB1996-0657

September 9, 1996

F/NW

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Re: Section 7 Informal Consultation, Forest Service and BLM
Actions Affecting Southern Oregon/Northern California
Coho Salmon in Oregon

Dear Messieurs:

This responds to your Biological Assessments (BAs) received by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on August 21 (Coos Bay BLM District), August 23 (Umpqua National Forest), and August 29, 1996 (Roseburg and Medford BLM Districts, Siuslaw National Forest) requesting consultation on actions which may affect Umpqua River cutthroat trout (*Onchorynchus clarki clarki*) (URCT). URCT was listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by NMFS on August 9, 1996 (61 FR 41514; August 9, 1996). This evolutionarily significant unit (ESU) includes anadromous, potamodromous, and resident cutthroat trout populations occurring below natural, impassable barriers in the Umpqua Basin. Critical habitat has not been proposed or designated for this ESU. This consultation is undertaken under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and its implementing regulations, 50 CFR Part 402.



The BAs also requested conferencing on these Umpqua Basin actions for the two anadromous salmonid ESUs proposed for listing under the ESA that coexist with URCT; i.e., Oregon Coast steelhead trout (60 FR 38011; July 25, 1995) and Oregon Coast coho salmon (61 FR 41514; August 9, 1996). The BAs stated, and NMFS concurs, that all effects determinations are the same for the three species.

The BAs included all ongoing and proposed (through first quarter FY97) actions that may affect URCT, and split the actions into two determination categories; 1) may affect, but not likely to adversely affect URCT (NLAA), and 2) may affect and likely to adversely affect URCT (LAA). The BAs requested concurrence from NMFS on the NLAA actions, and initiation of formal consultation with NMFS on the LAA actions. NMFS concludes informal consultation on the NLAA actions with this concurrence letter. Formal consultation will be concluded with the issuance of biological opinions covering the LAA actions.

The Streamlining Consultation guidance signed by Forest Service, BLM, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and NMFS Regional Executives on August 29, 1995, was followed in writing the BAs and making the NLAA determinations for these actions. The Level 1 teams agreed, with NMFS' active participation, on the content and effects determinations in the BAs before they were finalized. Effects determinations were made using a method suggested by NMFS for evaluating current aquatic conditions (the environmental baseline) and predicting effects of actions on them. This process is described in the document "Making ESA Determinations of Effect for Individual or Grouped Actions at the Watershed Scale" (NMFS 1996). NMFS believes that all NLAA actions fully meet the Northwest Forest Plan's Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives.

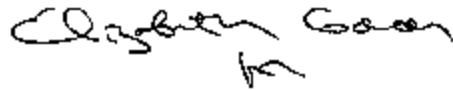
The two requirements for a NLAA determination for URCT and Oregon Coast steelhead & coho are: 1) the action does not have the potential to hinder attainment of relevant properly functioning habitat indicators (determined using the method cited above); and 2) the action has a negligible (extremely low) probability of causing take of the species. NMFS concurs that the actions listed in Table 1 below meet these two requirements and are therefore not likely to adversely affect URCT and Oregon Coast steelhead and coho, assuming that all actions are implemented in the manner described in the BAs and documentation cited in the BAs. The NLAA actions are listed as either: 1) programs that are NLAA basin-wide or on the stated administrative units (programmatics); or 2) specific

actions on the stated administrative unit. The timeframe for these actions is September 9, 1996 (URCT listing effective date) to December 31, 1996 (end of first quarter FY97).

This concludes informal consultation on this action in accordance with 50 CFR 402.14(b)(1). The Forest Service and BLM must reinitiate this ESA consultation if new information becomes available or circumstances occur that may affect listed species in a manner or to an extent not previously considered, or a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the action.

If you have any questions please contact Lance Smith at (503) 231-2307.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William Stelle, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

William Stelle, Jr.
Regional Administrator

Table 1. Ongoing or proposed (through first quarter FY97) actions on the Siuslaw National Forest, Umpqua National Forest, Roseburg BLM District, Coos Bay BLM District, and Medford BLM District that are not likely to adversely affect URCT.

ALL UMPQUA BASIN NATIONAL FORESTS AND BLM DISTRICTS

Basin-wide Programmatic Actions:

Special Forest Products
 Conifer Releases¹
 Tree Topping & Wildlife Snags
 Road Prism Salvage & Hazard Tree Removal²
 Precommercial Thins¹
 Trail Maintenance
 Campground Maintenance
 Broadcast Burning
 Fire Rehabilitation
 Plantation Brushing
 Noxious Weed Control (hand application)
 Roadside Alder Removal

¹ Applies only to areas more than 1 site-potential tree from all streams (including non-fish bearing and/or intermittent streams). All others are considered LAA and will be covered by formal consultation.

² AKA "negotiated roadside salvage". Within riparian reserves, NLAA only if all logs are retained outside the road prism (i.e., no logs removed from outside the road prism).

SPECIFIC UMPQUA BASIN NATIONAL FORESTS AND BLM DISTRICTS

Siuslaw National Forest

Mapleton Ranger District:

Noel Boat Landing
 Sulphur Fire Rehabilitation
 Use of Permitted Water Transmission Lines
 Rock Quarry Management

Umpqua National ForestForest-wide (programmatic):

Emergency Repair of Federally Owned Roads (ERFO) Projects
Quarry Blasting

Tiller Ranger District:

Brownson Access
S.U. Falls Sign
Acker Lookout
Catherine Falls Park
Beaver Outhouse
Rock Rim Trail
Podunk Pond

North Umpqua Ranger District:

Cedar Road Stormproofing
El Gato Timber Sale
Holy Mines
Little Oak Burn
Illahee Burn
Boulder Flat Toilet
Lynx Timber Sale

Diamond Lake Ranger District:

Prarie Salvage Timber Sale
Randy Timber Sale
Slipper Road Repair
Skookum Cabin
Pacific Road Maintenance

Roseburg BLM DistrictMt. Scott Resource Area:

North Bank HMA Culvert Replacement
Wolf Creek Road Repair - ERFO
Cavitt Creek Restroom Replacement
Susan Creek Trail Construction
PTI Cable Reburial Permit
Richard Baker Vault Toilet Replacement
Joker Creek Road Reclamation - Jobs in the Woods (JITW)

South Douglas Resource Area:

Berry Creek Slide Repair - ERFO
Stouts Creek Road Rehabilitation - JITW
White Rock Road Rehabilitation - ERFO
Roadside Mulching - JITW

Tyee Resource Area:

Little Wolf LSR Density Management
Martin Creek Slide Removal - ERFO
Basin Creek Slipout Repair - ERFO
Culvert Replacement Hubbard Creek - JITW
Thissleburn LSR Density Management

Coos Bay BLM

Grade Culvert Replacement
Sidewinder Salvage Timber Sale

Medford BLM

NLAA actions are those covered under "Basin-wide Programmatic Actions" described above.
